



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DES Announces Additional Support, Increasing Access to Child Care for Families

\$129.4 million will be available to Child Care Providers and Families

PHOENIX - (March 24, 2023) The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) announced additional improvements to strengthen Arizona's child care network, and support for families accessing care for their children. This latest wave of federal investments is focused on supporting Arizona's education workforce and child care providers, totaling more than \$129.4 million.

"Every investment into our educators and child care providers is an investment in Arizona's children and working families," said DES Director Angie Rodgers. "These funds will help recruit and retain the professionals who care for and teach our children, while empowering parents as they further their careers."

"Over the last three years, Arizona's child care network has stepped up to the challenges of providing safe and affordable care for children and families during unprecedented times," said Barbie Prinster, Executive Director for the Arizona Early Childhood Education Association. "DES' partnership with Arizona's child care providers and the early care and education community has been critical to ensure access to child care for children and families, stabilize child care providers and the workforce, and increase quality."

Beginning April 1, 2023, DES will implement two initiatives, creating access to high quality care and closing the cost gap for families and child care providers in the DES network, with a third initiative beginning July 2023.

Arizona Education Workforce Scholarship Program

Arizona's educators provide critical support for children and families, and rely on safe and affordable child care options to continue to provide high quality education and learning for Arizona's children. To qualify the parent: (1) must work in child care or publicly funded K-12 education serving as teachers, assistants, or other staff that provide direct care and ancillary support to children or whose critical job functions cannot be completed remotely; (2) have a child under the age of 12; and (3) a household income of \$65,000 or less annually.

Beginning April 1, interested participants can apply for the Arizona Education Workforce Scholarship Program on the DES [Child Care Grants and Scholarships](#) page.

DES Provider Rate Increase

Effective April 1, 2023, all DES contracted child care providers will receive a rate increase through June 30, 2024, offering additional financial support to improve access to child care for working families and vulnerable children. This rate increase further reduces the burden of the high cost of care for families and child care providers.

Targeted Child Care Provider Grants

The current DES child care provider grant program, set to expire in June 2023, has sustained Arizona's child care network by providing a consistent, reliable funding source directly to child care providers to cover increased costs. Through a new targeted grant program beginning in July 2023, additional funding will be made available through June 2024 to continue supporting the child care workforce and infrastructure needs of DES-contracted child care providers and DES-certified family child care providers. These grants are critical to access and provider affordability.

For more information about DES child care services and assistance, please visit des.az.gov/child-care.

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